

# What You Do Matters

For Healthy Living in Eastern Maine Communities

October 2008

## Did you know . . .



### Breast Cancer is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common type of cancer in Maine

Detect breast cancer early.  
**If you are:**

- Over 40, schedule a yearly mammogram and have a breast exam by a professional every year
- In your 20s and 30s have a clinical breast exam as part of a regular health exam by a health professional, preferably every 3 years.
- In your teens and 20s, begin a monthly breast self exam to become familiar for what's normal for you so you can detect any signs or symptoms or tell if a change occurs.

#### Look for changes such as:

- Development of a lump or swelling
- Skin irritation or dimpling
- Nipple pain or retraction (turning inward)
- Redness or scaliness of the nipple or breast skin
- A discharge other than breast milk.

#### Do what you can to reduce your risk:

- Enjoy a low-fat diet
- Limit alcohol consumption to no more than one drink per day
- Live an active life

For more information visit <http://www.cancer.org/>

## Y fit tip of the month. . .

Use the stairs to add strength to leg muscles and get a cardiovascular workout at the same time. Climbing two steps at a time builds the quadriceps (front thigh muscles) and the gluteus (butt). Going down steps builds strength in the quadriceps and to a lesser extent, the hamstrings (back thigh muscles.)

## Prescription Drug Safety What You Should Know

Safe storage and disposal of medicines is important in preventing prescription drug abuse, accidental poisonings, and harm to the environment.



There are just as many new abusers of prescription drugs as there are of marijuana. Misuse and abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is just as dangerous and addictive as abusing illegal drugs.

Here are four things you can do:

- Safeguard all drugs at home. Monitor quantities and control access.
- Talk to your kids about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs. Set clear rules for teens about all drug use, including not sharing medicine and always following the medical provider's advice and dosages.
- Be a good role model by following the same rules with your own medicines. Never share your medicine with others.

## Are you at risk? Risk factors include:

- Gender
- Aging
- Genetic Risk Factors
- Family History of Breast Cancer
- Personal History of Breast Cancer
- Certain benign breast conditions
- Menstruation at an early age and/or menopause at a later age
- Previous chest radiation
- Not having children or having them later in life
- Using post menopausal hormone therapy
- Not breastfeeding
- Increased alcohol consumption
- Being overweight or obese
- Lack of physical activity

**Flu season is right around the corner**

Flu season begins as early as October and lasts until May. Protect yourself from the flu! Get vaccinated today!

To find a flu clinic near you visit [www.flucliniclocator.org](http://www.flucliniclocator.org) For more information visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/basics.htm>

## Be prepared for Mr. Winter

Everyone should have an emergency preparedness stockpile in case of an ice storm, power outage or disease outbreak. Do you?

### Things to include in your emergency kit:

- Three day supply of food and water (one gallon of water per person)
- If you have room, a week's supply of food and water is recommended
- Foods that don't require refrigeration and are not high in salt (canned items are best)
- Copies of important documents
- Flashlight
- Manual can opener
- Battery Operated Radio
- Batteries

### Other important items to consider:

- Medical supplies
- Pet food
- Contact lens solution
- Diapers
- First Aid Kit

### Other tips...

- Store your emergency kit somewhere cool, dark, easy to get to, and not in an area of the house that may flood
- Keep your supplies in one tightly closed box or plastic container away from any solvents or cleaners
- Check your emergency kit once or twice a year for expired, damaged, or leaky items



**You can do this all at the same time each year...** an easy way to remember is **"Get Ready- Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks"**. Prepare your emergency kit today and check your stockpile twice a year when you change the clocks for daylight saving time. Don't forget to check the batteries in your smoke detector too!

## Make fire safety a priority this year.

Follow these basic rules:

### Space Heaters

- Never place units within three feet of a combustible material. Check the owner's manual to see if your unit requires even more clearance
- Never leave an operating space heater unattended
- Never re-fuel a kerosene or propane-fueled space heater when it is hot
- Consult your owner's manual to determine all safety requirements, i.e. does your unit require you to crack a window for ventilation?



### Woodstoves and Wood Pellet Stoves

- Follow the manufacturer's and Fire Code installation requirements for clearance, ventilation, and floor protection requirements
- Keep it clean. Cleaning out ash, maintaining moving parts, checking for creosote in the chimney, etc. are all routine and required tasks
- Only buy woodstoves or pellet stoves that are Underwriter's Laboratory-approved. The only true way to tell if a stove is if it meets these standards
- Watch for a build-up of creosote in the chimney
- Use seasoned firewood.
- Do not attempt to start a fire with flammable liquids such as gasoline
- Dispose of hot ashes in a metal container and place them a safe distance from your home
- Call your local fire department or chimney sweep service for a chimney inspection before you begin burning wood in any form.

### Oil and Natural Gas Central Heating Systems

- Schedule a cleaning with your service provider before the heating season starts
- Make sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations for clearance to combustibles.

### Good Sense Tips

- Insulate your home and caulk windows and doors.
- Open drapes and curtains on southern-facing walls during the day to take advantage of the solar heat remembering to close them at night
- Set thermostats at 68 degrees F when the house is occupied and 60 degrees F at night or when everyone is away
- Use kitchen and bath fans sparingly as they can pull a houseful of heated air out in just one hour.